

Preliminary Amendment
U.S. Application No. 10/618,690

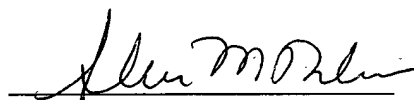
REMARKS

On November 30, 2005, the Examiner proposed an Examiner's Amendment to place the Application in condition for allowance. In particular, the Examiner proposed incorporating the subject matter of one of claims 3 or 4 into claim 1. On December 13, 2005, the undersigned contacted the Examiner to discuss independent claim 7. Upon review, the Examiner indicated that since claim 9 is analogous to claim 4, the incorporation of claim 9 into claim 7 would place claim 7 in condition for allowance. Accordingly, by this Amendment, Applicant has incorporated claims 2 and 3 into claim 1, and has rewritten claim 4 into independent form based on claims 1 and 2. Further, Applicant has incorporated claims 8 and 9 into claim 7.

In view of the above amendments, Applicant submits that the Application is now in condition for allowance, and such action is hereby solicited.

Entry and consideration of this Amendment are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison M. Tulino
Registration No. 48,294

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: December 16, 2005